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will be fortunate if the other volumes of the composite work to which this one belongs reach an equal standard of excellence.

W. H. HOLMES.

The Spanish Conquest in America and its Relation to the History of Slavery and to the Government of Colonies. By SIR ARTHUR HELPS. Edited by M. OPPENHEIM. (New York: John Lane, 1900-1904. Four vols., pp. xxxviii, 369; x, 365; xv, 400; xi, 374.

FOR a dozen years the book-buying market has been calling for a new edition of Helps's *Spanish Conquest*. The rapidly widening interest in the West Indies and in South America has found little satisfaction in the various manuals and volumes of personal misinformation which make up most of the bibliography of that part of the world. Helps remains as almost the only name which every one knows and with which confidence is associated. A mere reprint, however, would never have satisfied the public, much less the book-reviewers, and so the publishers have sought long and diligently for an editor. That only one edition has resulted apparently means two things: that there are very few people who pretend to know anything about early Spanish America, and that only one of these few has been willing to commit himself in regard to his opinion of the work of Sir Arthur Helps. The *Spanish Conquest* is so very good and so very bad, so delightful a presentation of the long-accepted versions of events, so perverse in its interpretation of many of the best-known happenings, so wearisome in its goodness, so uncritical in its acceptance of evidence, so admirable a specimen of the popular English historical attitude of the middle nineteenth century, that there is small wonder other students could not make up their minds how it ought to be edited. Mr. Oppenheim, who alone has ventured on the task, has succeeded most admirably in performing it in the spirit of his author. Just as Helps left the moral of the story to his readers' own insight, so his editor leaves them to find out for themselves what they think about Sir Arthur's historical method and manner. The notes correct some obvious mistakes, add considerable information from material published since the work first appeared, and otherwise elucidate the text, as on page 32 of the second volume, where Helps's statement, taken verbally from Las Casas, that a certain friar was a brother of the queen of Scotland, calls forth a list of all the brothers of all the Scottish queens who might have been living in 1516. It could not, of course, have entered the mind of Sir Arthur, any more that it has that of his editor, that the recognized heirs were sometimes not the only offspring of royalty, and that the half-brothers of queens, who very frequently rose to distinction in the religious orders, were not ordinarily included in the official genealogies. The editor not infrequently makes the mistake of saying too much, if he is not to say more, as where, on II, 56, he points out that Las Casas estimated the

width of South America as about double its actual extent, without adding that Sir Arthur, throughout this portion of his work, adopts the statements of Las Casas as his own, without comment or thought of verification.

The editor's important contribution, in the introduction and throughout the volumes, is the addition of cartographical material. Twenty-six of the most typical sixteenth-century maps are reproduced, in good size, and the introduction contains some suggestive remarks concerning the importance of finding out what were the contemporary notions of geographical location. The maps are not facsimiles, but are carefully redrawn so as to give the reader who is not accustomed to the documents themselves an excellent idea of the configuration and nomenclature of the originals. These redrawings would be distinctly more suitable for their purpose than actual facsimiles, if the editor had taken the trouble to provide some definite information regarding size, authorship, and significance. The absence of any such assistance, and the fact that the map of Venezuela faces the chapter on Honduras, that of Peru accompanies a chapter on the West Indies, and Chile one on Mexico, contribute to the feeling of sincerest regret that Mr. Lane has not succeeded in doing away with the need for any further reprinting of *The Spanish Conquest*.

G. P. W.

The United States; a History of Three Centuries, 1607-1904. In ten Parts. Part I. *Colonization, 1607-1697.* By WILLIAM ESTABROOK CHANCELLOR and FLETCHER WILLIS HEWES. (New York and London: G. P. Putnam's Sons. 1904. Pp. xxiii, 533.)

IN this era of many-volume histories of the United States the first question that the reviewer must settle is the claim that the work may have to existence—not whether it will find a market, but whether it is fit to set before the intelligent reading public. In the present case it may be safely said that if the publishers of the book had submitted the manuscript of it to expert criticism before launching it into print, the review that follows would not have been written.

The publishers' announcement that the series of ten volumes is to constitute "a comprehensive narrative which shall cover the entire record of the national history and development" of the United States does not differentiate the work from its fellows in the same field. Neither do the proposed titles of the volumes indicate any deviation from the familiar text-book paradigm. Obedient to the general scheme, the introductory number of the series starts with Columbus and the Spaniards, turns aside for a glance at the Indians, then jogs stolidly along through wastes of arid description and platitudinous rhetoric, till 1697 bars the way.

The book is divided into four sections: "Population and Politics", "War", "Industry", and "Civilization". For the first, second, and